

Dear Chairman Powell and Commissioners,

Let me just say that television programming is so void of any educational substantial information that pertains to my life as a voting citizen in the USA. I want to know about issues, not personalities or hair styles.

Local public affairs programming is virtually non-existent--constituting less than one half of 1% of all local programming. More than half of news broadcasts prior to the 2002 elections did not include a single campaign story. Our democracy is at risk when many Americans don't know basic facts about the candidates or the issues, as was the case in the 2000 elections.

And we wonder why people are apathetic when it comes to voting.

Broadcasters have clearly failed in their obligation to serve the public interest. The FCC should define meaningful public interest requirements that include local civic and electoral affairs programming. At a minimum, broadcasters should air three hours per week of local civic and electoral affairs programming, with at least two hours devoted to substantive election coverage in the six weeks prior to Election Day.

As the elections approach, a well-functioning democracy demands that citizens have access to a diversity of opinions and voices on the choices confronting us.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Gerry Federico
Gerry Federico
7561 N. Edgewater Ave.
Portland, OR 972035081